

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 now stand in the application, minor editorial corrections having been made to certain of original claims 1-8, and new claims 9-13 added. Reconsideration of the application and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

All claims stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,584,190 to Bressler. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present invention is directed to a technique for providing preferential connection service to preferred users. The Background discussion points out that one way to do this is to provide dedicated links between preferred users, and another way is to allow the preferred users to override other calls in progress. Neither of these techniques are satisfactory. The present invention solves the problem by allocating one of more segments of each link to use by preferred users, then allowing the preferred users to share this subset of the capacity.

Bressler is directed to the sending of out-of-band telephony control signaling over data networks. A telephony system according to Bressler includes first type links (SS7 links) ordinarily used to carry control signaling, and also includes a data network having second type links (IP links). The IP Links may be used to add incremental capacity to an existing SS7 network, or may be used as more cost-effective communications channels for SS7 control signaling. There is no mention anywhere in Bressler of having preferential user access to one or the other, or to having preferential user access to any subset of either.

In particular, Bressler does not teach either the permanent reservation or the dynamic allocation recited in the last two paragraphs of claim 1. The examiner refers to lines 23-39 of column 5 of Bressler as teaching the permanent reservation step. But this excerpt merely describes that when a call is made, the destination SSP sees that a line to the called party is available for ringing, then rings the line and sends a message back to the originating SSP indicating that the remote end of the trunk circuit has been reserved. This has nothing to do with preferred status of some users, nor with permanent reservation of circuit segments. It is merely the reservation of a trunk for a call in progress.

For the dynamic allocation step, the examiner refers to lines 6-22 of column 5 and lines 17-25 of column 10. These excerpts discuss routing calls over SS7 links or IP links, but do not discuss the dynamic allocation of those circuits earlier described in the claim as being reserved. The trunk Bressler has reserved in the excerpt in column 5 is a trunk reserved for a call in progress. There is no dynamic allocation of that trunk amongst preferred users.

For the above reasons, it is believed that claim 1 and its dependent claims patentably distinguish over Bressler. Further, original independent claim 5 distinguishes over the prior art for the same reasons.

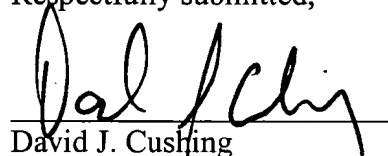
New claims 9-13 are added to cover the invention in different terms and different scope. Bressler does not teach having preferred users given higher priority access to some segments than to other segments, nor does Bressler teach having preferred users having higher priority access to certain segments than non-preferred users. Accordingly, all of claims 9-13 are believed to also patentably distinguish over the prior art.

Amendment
USSN 09/907,908

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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